An Analysis of the Accusative Case Use of Learners of Turkish as a Foreign Language

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Abstract

Error analysis is the process of identifying, categorizing and analysing students' errors. Despite its limitations, it helps us gain a better understanding of the learning process in general and spot problematic structures for language learners. The aim of this study is to analyse the accusative case use of learners of Turkish as a second language. For that purpose, a mini-corpus was created based on 40 writing samples randomly selected from the texts produced by B2 and C1 level students at OMU Türkçe for their midterm and final exams during the previous academic years. In the examination of the mini-corpus, which includes 7177 tokens and 2991 types, the researchers initially identified all end of the word occurrences of the morpheme -i and its allomorphs. The correct and incorrect uses of the Turkish accusative case marking and the cases of omission were manually tagged by the researchers. All the erroneous uses have been classified under four headings: substitution, omission, addition and other. The findings of this study show that of 201 attempts to use the Turkish accusative case, 76 were erroneous. Besides, 62 instances of omission were manually tagged by the researchers. Of all the errors, substitution constituted 25,66%, addition 23,68 % , omission 40,79% and other errors 9,87%. The results mark the accusative case as a complex structure for learners and omission as the error category with the highest frequency. The study highlights the importance of teaching C-Selection rules with verbs.

Keywords: Error-Analysis, Corpus, Turkish, Accusative Case, Foreign Language Teaching

Yabancı Dil Olarak Türkçe Öğrenenlerin Belirtme Durumu Kullanımlarının İncelenmesi

Öz

Hata analizi, öğrencilerin hatalarının belirlenmesi, sınıflandırılması ve incelenmesini içeren bir süreçtir. Tüm sınırlılıklarına rağmen, genel olarak öğrenme sürecini anlaşılmasına ve yabancı dil öğrenenler için anlaşılması güç olabilecek yapıları belirlenmesine katkıda bulunur. Bu araştırmanın amacı, Türkçe'yi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen uluslararası öğrencilerin belirtme durumu kullanımlarını incelemektir. Bunun için, önceki yıllarda OMÜ Türkçe'de B2 ve C1 kurlarını bitirmiş öğrencilerin ara sınav ve yılsonu sınavında yazdıkları 40 adet örnek metin araştırmacılar tarafından rastlantısal olarak seçilerek bir mini-derlem oluşturulmuştur. 7177 sözcük ve 2991 farklı sözcük içeren bu derlemin incelenmesinde, öncelikle belirtme durumu eki olan –i ve biçimdeşleri belirlenmiştir. Daha sonra, bu ekin doğru ve yanlış kullanımları ve ekin unutulduğu durumlar, araştırmacılar tarafından elle işaretlenmiştir. Belirlenen tüm hatalı kullanımlar yerine geçme, çıkarma, ekleme ve diğerleri olmak üzere toplam dört başlık altında toplanmıştır. Çalışmadan elde edilen bulgular, belirtme durum ekinin 201 kez kullanıldığını, bunlardan 76'sının ise hatalı olduğunu göstermiştir. Ayrıca, araştırmacılar bu ekin gerekli olduğu halde 62 kez kullanılmadığını

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belirlemiştir. Tüm hataların, %25,66'sını yerine geçme, %23,68'sini ekleme, %40,79'unu çıkarma ve %9,87'sini diğer hataların oluşturduğu saptanmıştır. Sonuçlar belirtme durum ekinin yabancı dil öğrenenler için öğrenilmesi güç yapılardan biri olduğunu ve eylemlerle birlikte C–seçme kurallarının öğretiminin önemini göstermiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Hata Analizi, Derlem, Türkçe, Belirtme Durumu, Yabancı Dil Öğretimi

Introduction

The complexity of the Turkish case system is no doubt a challenge for those who are interested in learning Turkish. Our experiences in the language classroom seem to be a proof of such complexity. Either due to inherent complexities within the system or its dissimilarity to their native language, students- even those with high proficiency levels- fail to assign the right case in an otherwise perfectly constructed sentence. Errors regarding case use seem to persist even in later stages of learning despite the fact that students are introduced the case system early in the language classroom. A quick review of two most widely-used course books for teaching Turkish reveals that all case markers are taught within the first 6 units of A1 level. For example, *Istanbul Turkish for Foreigners Coursebook* teaches the locative case in the second unit, dative and ablative case in the third unit, and accusative and genitive case in the fourth unit of A1, while *Yeni Hitit* series introduce the dative, locative and ablative cases in the second unit and the genitive case in the third unit of the A1-A2 course book. Despite the early introduction, the assignment of an erroneous marker or lack of marking is often the case in student's writing samples.

Case Marking in Turkish

Turkish has six different cases. Each case- except for the absolute case- requires the addition of a suffix- or one of its many allomorphs- to the noun, pronoun or infinitive. Regarding the distinctive meaning that each case adds to the word, Lewis (2000: 46) notes that the absolute case can be used for nominative, vocative and the indefinite accusative, while the use of the accusative case is limited to the defined accusative. He adds that the dative case denotes the indirect object and the end of the notion, the locative case the place where, the ablative case the point of departure and the genitive case possession. The following examples illustrate how case marking operates in Turkish:

Absolute Case: Absolute case requires no suffixes added to the word.

e.g. <u>Oda</u> karanlık. /<u>The room</u> is dark.

Accusative Case: The accusative case requires the addition of the suffixes -i, -ı, -u or -ü to the word. A buffer letter (-y) might be necessary between the word and suffix in some cases.

e.g. *Odayı* temizledik./ We cleaned <u>the room</u>.

Dative Case: The dative case requires the addition of the suffixes -e or -a to the word. A buffer letter (-y) might be necessary between the noun and suffix in some cases.

e.g. <u>Odaya</u> girdim./ I entered <u>the room</u>.

Locative Case: The locative case requires the addition of the suffixes -de, -da, -te, or -ta to the word. No buffer letter is necessary.

e.g. <u>Odada</u> kim var?/ Who is <u>in the room</u>?

Ablative Case: The ablative case requires the addition of the suffixes -den, -dan, -ten or -tan to the word. No buffer letter is necessary.

e.g. <u>Odadan</u> çıktım./ I exited <u>the room</u>.

Genitive Case: The genitive case requires the addition of the suffixes -ın, -in, -un or -ün to the word. A buffer letter (-n) might be necessary between the noun and suffix in some cases.

e.g. <u>Odanın duvarları</u> mavi./ <u>The walls of the room</u> are blue.

English uses different prepositions to achieve what Turkish achieves using case markers. However, the correspondence between prepositions and case markers is not always straightforward. As it can be seen in the example sentences above, the absolute, accusative, dative and ablative cases in Turkish correspond to the phrase "the room" when the sentences are translated into English. This makes the case system difficult to internalize and use for learners of Turkish with native languages like English. It becomes even more difficult when rules regarding the vowel harmony are applied and the same suffix is used for other purposes other than case marking.

Turkish Inflectional Morpheme –i

As it was stated above, the Turkish accusative case requires the addition of the suffix -i or one of its allomorphs to the word. However, this suffix can also be used as an inflectional morpheme to make nouns out of verbs and to form a possessive noun phrase. According to Lewis (2000: 220), the inflectional morpheme -i "…denotes action or the result of an action. It occurs (neologisms aside) only with monosyllabic consonant stems." For example, Turkish adjective "dolu (full)" is formed with the addition of this inflectional morpheme to the monosyllabic verb stem "dol- (to fill)." The allomorph -u is used instead of -i due to vowel harmony rules.

As to the formation of a possessive noun phrase in Turkish, Kornfilt (1997: 185) writes that "the possessive noun phrase places the possessor in the genitive case, and the possessed element as the head of the construction. Suffixed to that head is the possessive agreement suffix, agreeing with the possessor in person and in number." To put it more simply, genitive case marker is added to the possessor and suffix –i is added to the possessed. In this construction, possessor precedes the possessed. The following is an example of a possessive phrase in Turkish:

e.g. Mehmet'in ödevi

*Mehmet+**gen.** homework+**suffix –i***

*"**Mehmet's homework**"*

Turkish language allows this possessive construction to be followed by any of the case markers. In the following example, the inflectional suffix -i is followed by the locative case marking:

e.g. Mehmet'in ödev-i-n-de hata var.

*Mehmet+**gen.** homework+**suffix –i+ n+loc. exist.***

*"**There is a mistake in Mehmet's homework.**"*

Such a construction is often no problem for learners of Turkish as two suffixes attached to the possessed noun are morphologically dissimilar. However, when the position of the possessive noun phrase requires an accusative case marker, two morphologically similar suffixes follow each other with a buffer letter between them:

e.g. Mehmet'in ödev-i-n-i görmedim.

*Mehmet+**gen.** homework+**suffix –i+ n+acc. see+neg.+ past tense+ 1st person***

*"**I didn't see Mehmet's homework.**"*

Students' unawareness of the different uses of the inflection -i and its allomorphs or their inability to discriminate between these uses might make the accusative case more challenging than the other cases in the system. Hence, this study focuses on how accurately learners of Turkish use the accusative case in Turkish.

Literature Review

There are numerous studies in the field of second language education that discuss learners' use of a certain grammar topic based on a written corpus. Kim & Yoo (2015), for example, carried out an analysis of Korean freshman students' use of to-infinitives in English to ascertain how accurately students were able to use this specific structure. For that purpose, the researchers formed a corpus using 851 written essays produced by incoming freshman students, identified all instances of to-infinitives in the corpus and singled out the errors. They found out that in their essays freshman students had produced 2,309 tokens of to-infinitives, and only 171 of them were errors, which they argued indicated a strong understanding of to-infinitive among the participants of the study. The errors they found were classified as substitution, omission, addition and other errors. Of these categories, substitution was found to be the error category with the highest frequency (42,0%) (Kim & Yoo, 2015). Based on the analysis of errors, they concluded that most errors stemmed from students' lack of

understanding of C-selection, and they, therefore, pointed out the necessity of informing learners with detailed C-selection rules regarding new verbs.

Another corpus-based analysis of learner language was carried out by Can (2017), who studied verb errors of Turkish EFL learners across all proficiency levels. To be able to do that, Can (2017) used data retrieved from Turkish EFL learner subcorpus in Cambridge Learner Corpus (CLC) and studied inflectional, derivational and word form errors in verb use of Turkish learners of English. His findings showed that the highest error frequency was the incorrect choice of the verb (Can, 2017). The study also revealed a negative correlation between error frequency and proficiency level. However, some error categories, such as incorrect verb choice, incorrect verb form choice, verb agreement and derivation of verb persisted in higher proficiency levels.

Working on a smaller sized data, Tahaineh (2011) examined Arab EFL students' use of prepositions in a total of 162 compositions written by Jordanian university students. The researcher detected 2290 errors in the use of prepositions. He found out that 78% of the errors fell into the category of substitution, 7% into the category of omission and 15% into the category of addition. The study also defined *by, in, on, to, with, of, from, for* and *at* as the most difficult prepositions for Arab speakers in English (Tahaineh, 2011).

Stapa & Izahar (2010) studied subject-verb agreement errors in argumentative and factual compositions written by 20 Malaysian post-graduate teacher trainees. The researchers detected a total 8081 errors, 74 of which were subject-verb agreement related errors. These were grouped under 5 subcategories: subject verb agreement of person, subject verb agreement of number, agreement with coordinated subjects, notional agreement and proximity (Stapa & Izahar, 2010). The results showed that the highest error frequency was observed in subject verb agreement of number.

With a view to study students' errors in the use of the simple present tense, Muhsin (2016) collected samples from 17 eighth graders in Makassar Junior High School in Indonesia through a descriptive writing test. The errors identified in these samples were classified as errors of omission, addition, missed information, and improper ordering. The analysis showed that there was a total of 143 errors in the use of the simple present tense, which made up one fourth of all the errors. Among the error categories, improper ordering had the highest number.

In another corpus-based study, Babanoğlu (2014) compared the use of the verb "make" by Turkish and Japanese learners of English through data gathered from Turkish Corpus of Learner English and Japanese Corpus of Learner English in International Corpus of Learner English (ICLE) to Louvain Corpus of Native English Essays (LOCHNESS). The results showed that "...Turkish learners have difficulty in the use of 'make' to a certain degree" (Babanoğlu, 2014, p. 43). In addition to studies that analyse

only one aspect of grammar, there are error analysis studies that attempt to identify and classify all errors in written corpus. These are Divsar & Heydari (2017), Pèrez Sànchez (2013), Ozcan (2012), Tokdemir Demirel (2017), Dagneaux & Denness & Granger (1998), to name a few. The review of current literature has unfortunately revealed no studies that analyze learner language among learners' of Turkish as a foreign or second language.

The purpose of this study is to analyse the accusative case use of learners of Turkish as a second language. The current study seeks answers to the following research questions (RQ):

RQ1: To what extent are learners of Turkish able to use the accusative case accurately?

RQ2: What are the categories of errors in the learners' use of accusative case in Turkish?

Methodology

Participants

The participants of this study consist of 40 randomly selected learners of Turkish who completed B2 and C1 classes at Ondokuz Mayıs University Turkish Teaching Practice and Research Center (OMU Türkçe).

Data Collection

To create a mini-corpus for the purposes of this study, 40 writing samples were randomly selected from the texts produced by B2 and C1 level students at OMU Türkçe for their midterm and final exams during the previous academic years. B2 and C1 level students were preferred due to their ability to produce longer, clearer, more detailed and better-structured texts on a wide range of topics than threshold independent and basic users according to CEFR descriptors. During the midterm and final exams, OMÜ Türkçe students were given the writing and reading sections during a session of 90 minutes. The randomly selected 40 writing samples were on the following topics:

- The place of technology in your life
- An unforgettable holiday
- The characteristics of your future partner
- A festival in your country
- The importance of time management
- Tourism in your country
- The role of luck in success
- Love

The samples, which were handwritten by the participants during the exam period, were later typed by the researchers and saved as a plain text in the electronic environment in preparation for data analysis.

Data Analysis

In data analysis, the researchers chose to use #Lancsbox due to their familiarity with using this software package. #LancsBox was used to create a word list out of the mini-corpus, to find out the tokens (running words) and types (different words), and to reveal all instances of Turkish accusative case marking in the student writings.

The correct and incorrect uses of Turkish accusative case marking and the instances of omission, and the cases of substitution where students substituted another case for the accusative were manually tagged by the researchers. All the erroneous uses and lack of Turkish accusative case marking were classified under four headings: substitution, omission, addition and other.

Findings and Discussion

In the examination of the mini-corpus, which includes 7177 tokens and 2991 types, the researchers initially identified all end of the word occurrences of the morpheme -i and its allomorphs using the software. Results were also manually checked. In the discussion of the examples, all the errors except for case marking were corrected.

Table 1. *Occurences of the Accusative Case*

	Morpheme I	Morpheme ı	Morpheme u	Morpheme ü	Total
IC	27	37	6	6	76
C	50	63	8	4	125
Total	77	100	14	10	201

The researchers detected a total of 201 instances of the accusative case, which includes 77 instances of the morpheme -i, 100 instances of the morpheme -ı, 14 instances of the morpheme -u and 10 instances of the morpheme -ü. Of all the attempts to use the accusative case, 76 were erroneous and 125 were correct. As it can be seen in Table 1, although correct usages of the accusative case outnumber the incorrect usages, the total number of errors cannot be underestimated, considering the size of the corpus and the total number of the accusative case use. Besides, the manual tagging of the mini-corpus showed 62 cases of omission of the accusative case and 14 instances where another case substituted for the accusative case.

Table 2. *The Categorization of Errors*

Error Categories	Number	Percentage
Substitution	39	25,66
Omission	62	40,79
Addition	36	23,68
Other	15	9,87
Total	152	100

Of all the erroneous forms, 39 were classified as substitution, 62 as omission, 36 as addition and 15 as other.

Errors of Substitution

In the data collected, 39 instances of substitution errors were observed. For further examination of these substitution errors, the researchers reorganized these errors into the following sub-categories: (a) Absolute Case for Accusative, (b) Accusative Case for Absolute; (c) Dative Case for Accusative, (d) Accusative Case for Dative; (e) Locative Case for Accusative, (f) Accusative Case for Locative; (g) Genitive Case for Accusative, (h) Accusative Case for Genitive; (i) Preposition for Accusative Case, (j) Accusative Case for Preposition. The ablative case was not included in the subcategorization of substitution errors because the substitution of the ablative case for accusative is presented under the category of omission.

Table 3. *Subcategories of Errors of Substitution*

Error Categories	Number	Percentage
Absolute Case for Accusative	1	2,56
Accusative Case for Absolute	4	10,26
Dative for Accusative Case	7	17,95
Accusative Case for Dative	12	28,21
Locative Case for Accusative	3	7,69
Accusative Case for Locative	1	2,56
Genitive Case for Accusative	0	0%
Accusative Case for Genitive	5	15,38
Preposition for Accusative Case	3	7,69
Accusative Case for Preposition	3	7,69
Total	39	100

Table 3 shows that, of all the subcategories of substitution errors, the most frequently occurring one is the substitution of the accusative case for the dative case with 12 errors, which constitutes 28,21% of substitution errors. It is followed by the substitution of the dative case with the accusative case, which accounts for 17,95% of the substitution errors. Following are examples of the substitution of the accusative case for the dative case and vice versa:

e.g.　(1) ***Onu** saygı göstermeliyiz. [We should respect **him/her**.]

　　　(2) Bu mektup ***onu** ulaşmaz. [This letter won't reach **him/her**.]

　　　(3) Yemin et ***sevdiğini**. [Swear **that you love**.]

　　　(4) Herkes bu ***konuyu** farklı bir cevap veriyor. [Everyone has a different answer on **that topic**.]

　　　(5) ***Kendi kendini** güveneceksin. [You should trust **yourself**.]

　　　(6) ***Seni** kızmayacağım. [I won't be mad **at you**.]

　　　(7) Gökten ateş bile yağsa ***seni** geleceğim. [Even fire poured from the sky, I will come **to you**.]

In all the examples above, students substituted the accusative case for the dative case, where the dative case would be the correct form. When we look closer to the sentences, we notice that the

verbs used in the sentences above are intransitive verbs or phrases. Explaining verbs in Turkish, Kornfilt (1997:120) states that "just as English, and other well studied languages, Turkish has transitive and intransitive verbs, the former taking direct objects, the latter not." Being intransitive, these verbs and collocations-"saygı göstermek/to show respect," "ulaşmak/to reach," "yemin etmek/ to swear," "cevap vermek/ to respond," "çalışmak/ to study," "güvenmek/to trust," "kızmak/ to be mad," and "gelmek/to come," - can only be assigned an indirect object, which can be marked by attaching the dative suffix -(y)e. Because the verb transitivity could differ from language to language as much as the preposition or the case marking they require, verbs-transitive or intransitive- should be taught with the case markers they assign to their objects.

(9) ***Birbirlerine** bilmiyorlar. [They don't know **each other.]**

(10) ***Birbirine** seviyorlar. [They like **each other.**]

(11) ***Binaya** kontrol etmeniz gerekir. [You must check **the building.**]

(12) ***Gözlerine** çok özledim. [I have missed **your eyes.**]

The verbs in examples (9), (10), (11), and (12) are transitive verbs in Turkish and require a direct object marked with the accusative case suffix –(y)i. It seems that students are aware that the verbs "bilmek/to know," "sevmek/to like", kontrol etmek/to check" and "özlemek/to miss" are complete with an object. However, they produced erroneous statements as they incorrectly assigned an indirect object to these verbs.

 (13) O erkek, ***onu** güzel bir mesaj yazar. [That man writes **him/her** a nice message.]

Example (13) will be discussed separately from the examples above as it is a transitive verb. In this example, the student assigned the accusative case marking -(n)u to the pronoun "o," which is the indirect object of the verb, while the direct object remains unmarked. In this case, the student might be familiar with the rule that case marking is not obligatory for direct objects. In other verbs, the direct object of a verb may be marked with the accusative case or be unmarked, as in the example above. However, "o" -being the indirect object and the recipient of the message- must be in the dative form.

(14) Bazen iki ***bebeği** olmasını istiyorum. [Sometimes I want to have two **babies**.]

(15) ***Evi** sahibi ziyafet vermeli. [The owner **of the house** must throw a feast.]

(16) İkramlar ***çocukları** arasında dağıttılar. [They distributed the treats among **the kids**.]

(17) ***Birbirlerini** kalplerini sevmiyorlar. [They don't like **each other's** hearts.]

(18) ***Onu** kalbinden **çıkardı**. **[**He got **him** out of his heart.**]**

(19) Güven ***insanları** arasında var. [There is trust among **people**.]

Examples above illustrate students' failed attempts to use a definite noun compound in Turkish. Göknel (2014: 69) states that in Turkish "a noun compound is composed of two parts: "the 'possessive' (tamlayan) and the 'owned' (tamlanan) parts." Of these two parts, the possessive part takes the genitive suffix. However, in examples (15), (16), (17), (18) and (19), it is seen that the students

attached the allomorphs of the accusative suffix where they should have attached the genitive suffix. The grammatically correct form of the noun compounds above would be "evin sahibi," çocukların arasında," "birbirlerinin kalplerini," "onun kalbi" and "insanların arasında." In example (14), on the other hand, the student seems to have replaced the accusative case for the genitive suffix in the owned part of the noun compound. Göknel (2014: 69) states that "all subject pronouns, common nouns, proper nouns, and infinitives can be used in the possessive parts of the noun compounds." It is worth mentioning here that when a pronoun is used in the possessive part of the noun compound, the genitive suffix must be added to both possessed and the owned parts of the noun compound. Accordingly, in example (14), the student failed to apply the rules regarding the formation of noun compound with a possessive pronoun. The correct noun compound is *[ben**im**] bebeğ**im***, which translates as "my baby." The possessive part could be left out.

(20) Herkes bu konuya farklı bir *****cevabı** veriyor. [Everyone gives a different **answer** to this subject.]

(21) Yazarı ve şairleri *****kendini kendinisi** bakış açısına göre tarif ediyorlar. [They describe writers and poets according to **their own** perspective.]

(22) Akşam olana kadar oyalanarak *****zamanı** geçiriyor. [They spend **time** by idling around.]

In example (20), we see the use of the accusative case following the word "*bir*." Concerning the use of the accusative case with "bir", Lewis (2000: 244) writes that "Although the accusative suffix shows that the word to which it is attached is definite, the use of it is not precluded by the presence of *bir*, since this, as well as being the indefinite article, is the numeral one." However, in sentence (20), the meaning of the sentence requires use of "*bir*" as the indefinite article, hence making the noun compound "farklı bir cevabı" incorrect in this context. The use of the accusative suffix "ı" in example (22) is erroneous for the same reason as in example (20). In sentence (21), we see the incorrect use of the reflexive pronoun "kendi." In Turkish noun compounds, the reflexive pronoun "kendi" could be used in the "possessive" position." However, in this case, the possessive part does doesn't take any suffixes.

(23) Bir *****kızda** düşünüyorum. [I am thinking of a **girl**.]

(24) Tatil *****yapmakta** hayal ediyorum. [I am dreaming of **going on** holiday.]

(26) *****Odalarde** kontrol edebilirsiniz. [You could check **the rooms**.]

(27) *****Bayramı** öğle yemeğinden sonra misafirler çocuklarla geldiler. [On the eid (day), guests came after lunch with children.]

Sentences (23), (24), (25) are examples of the cases where students incorrectly replaced the accusative case with the locative case, hence wrote "kızda" for "kızı," "yapmakta" for "yapmayı," and "odalarda" for "odaları." All these sentences require objects in the accusative case as the verbs of the

sentences are transitive verbs. In sentence (27), however, the locative case suffix must be used instead of the accusative case to form the prepositional phrase "on the eid [day]."

(28) ***Onun hakkında** size anlatacağım. [I will tell you **about her/him**.]

(29) Bir problem olduğunda herkes ***birbiriyle** düşünüyordu. [When there was a problem, they thought about each other.]

(30) Şansın en önemli şey ***gibi** hissediyorlar. [They felt that luck was the most important thing.]

(31) Bazen gençler ***uygulamaları** kız arkadaşları ile tanışıp evlenirler. [Sometimes, young people meet their girlfriends **via these applications**.]

(32) Teknoloji ***hayatımızı** çok önemlidir. [Technology is very important **for our life**.]

(33) Ailem ***seni** tanışmak istiyor. [My family wants to meet **with you**.]

In the sentences above, we see the instances where students used the prepositions "hakkında," "(y)le," and "gibi" where they should have used the accusative case as the verbs in sentences (28) and (29) are transitive verbs and are not used with a preposition. In sentence (30), the preposition "gibi" is unnecessary and must be replaced with the verb "olmak/to be" followed by the derivational morpheme "-dık" and the accusative suffix. In the last three sentences, students used the accusative suffix where they should have used the prepositions "ile" and "için."

Errors of Omission

"Omission errors are characterized by the absence of an item that must appear in a well-formed utterance" (Muhsin, 2016: 83). Of all the main error categories, errors of omission has the highest percentage with 62 cases of omission in 51 ill-formed sentences. In these sentences, students failed to use the accusative suffix 38 times after a noun, 13 times after a verb, 6 times after a gerund and 5 times after a pronoun.

Table 4. *Subcategories of Errors of Omission*

Error Categories	Number	Percentage
After a Noun	38	61,29
After a Pronoun	5	8,06
After a Verb	13	20,97
After a Gerund	6	9,68
Total	62	100

(34) ***Evimiz** nasıl temizleyeceğiz? [How are we going to clean **our house**?]

(35) Facebook'ta hem ***fikirlerin** paylaşabilirsin hem de ***arkadaşların** arayabilirsin. [On Facebook, you could both share your ideas and search for your friends.]

(36) ***Kardeşim** aradığım sırada pili bitti. [Its battery died when I called **my sister/brother**.]

(37) ***Pasaportum** alın. [Take my passport.]

(38) Çocuklar dedelerinin ve anneannelerinin *ellerin öperler. [Children kiss their grandparent's hands.]

(39) *Türkler çok seviyorum. [I like Turks.]

(40) *Her bayram aynı renkler alıyor. [Every eid, s/he buys the same colors.]

Although the omission of the accusative case suffix is most common after a noun, as the example sentences above indicate, students have a tendency to leave out the accusative suffix especially if it is preceded by another suffix. The lack of the accusative suffix after the first, second and third person genitive suffixes "-(i)m, -(i)n and –(i)miz in examples (34), (35), (36), (37) and (38) and after the plural suffixes "-ler, -lar" led to the classification of these sentences under the category of omission. Based on these examples, one might speculate that students tend to avoid the accusative case suffix when it is preceded by the genitive suffix or the plural suffix.

(40) O *ben aramadı. [S/he didn't call me.]

(41) Ben *bu biliyorum.[I know this.]

(42) Teknoloji sayesinde bazı *şeyler yapabilir. [Thanks to technology we can do some things.]

(43) Bize *herşey verdiniz. [You have given us everything.]

(44) Hala *herşey hatırlıyor. [S/he still remembers everything.]

In the sentences above, students have used the nominative form of the pronouns instead of the accusative form, thus forming ill-formed sentences. We see that students failed to attach the accusative suffix to both personal pronouns and indefinite pronouns, such as everything. In the data collected, it was also observed that students were not able to apply the gerund suffix+accusative suffix formula before transitive verbs. In some of the sentences, either the accusative suffix or both gerund and accusative suffix were missing as the following examples show:

(45) Ben kocamın futbol *seviyor istiyor. [I want my husband to love football.]

(46) Benim kocam yemek *pişirmek biliyor. [My husband knows how to cook.]

(47) *Evlenmek düşünüyorum. [I am thinking of getting married.]

(48) *Planlama başarıya giden yol olarak düşünürüz. [We consider planning as a way to success.]

In sentence (45), the student used the present continuous form of the verb "sevmek/to love" before the transitive verb "istemek/to want." This construction is incorrect as a number of suffixes are missing as well as the accusative suffix. In the examples that follow, however, students seem to have successfully added the gerund suffixes "mek/mak" and "me/ma" to the base form of the verbs but not the accusative suffix. These sentences bear an interesting resemblance with the examples of omission where the possessive suffixes were in place after a noun but the accusative suffixes that should follow the possessive suffix were missing. Therefore, it might be asserted that accusative suffix might be a problem for students especially when it is preceded by other suffixes.

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Errors of Addition

Although not as common as the errors of omission, 39 instances where students used the accusative case suffix unnecessarily were detected. This makes up 25,32% of all the errors detected.

Table 5. *Subcategories of Errors of Addition*

Error Categories	Number	Percentage
Noun in Object Position	6	16,67
Noun in Subject Position	23	63,89
Noun in Verb Position	1	2,78
Pronoun	4	11,11
Verb	1	2,78
Adverb	1	2,78
Total	36	100

According to table 5, the accusative case suffix was unnecessarily attached to nouns in object position, nouns in subject position, nouns in verb position, pronouns and verbs. However, of these subcategories, nouns in subject position have the highest frequency with 63,89%. The following are examples of where accusative suffix was attached to a noun or a pronoun in subject position:

(49) Okulumuzda *öğrencileri nasıl öğrenebilecekler? [In our school, how can **students** learn?]

(50) *Yolları çok uzun. [**Roads** are long.]

(51) *Hayatımızı daha iyi oldu. [**Our life** has become better.]

(52) Özellikle Irak'ta *bayramı çok değişti. [Especially in Iraq, **eid** has changed a lot.]

(53) Bütün *aileleri toplandı. [All **families** gathered.]

(54) *Bunları günlük hayatımızdan örnekler. [**These** are examples from our daily lives.]

(55) Ama *onları müslümanlar ve umre yapıyorlar. [But **they** are muslims and go for umrah.]

The incorrect use of the accusative suffix with nouns and pronouns in subject position reveals that students were not able to apply one of the basic rules about the accusative case in Turkish. As Lewis (2000: 34) puts it, "it marks the definite object of the verb." Therefore, the accusative case suffix should not be added to nouns or pronouns in the subject position. However, other examples from the mini corpus showed that students also needlessly marked an inconsiderable number of nouns with the accusative case suffix:

(56) O zaman yeni bir ev ve güçlü bir *ailemi kurmak istiyorum. [I want to start a new home and a **family**.]

In the sentence (56), we notice that the student marked an indefinite noun in object position in the accusative case. Brown (2000: 224) states that "... once learners have begun to acquire parts of the new system, more and more intralingual transfer-generalizations within the target language- are manifested." On that note, we could speculate that the students were aware of the rule that transitive verbs in Turkish such as "vermek/to give" and "istemek/to want" might take an object marked with the accusative suffix. However, accusative marking is not possible when the noun is preceded by "bir"

acting as the indefinite article. Therefore, sentence (57) can be fixed by removing the first person possessive suffix "m" and the accusative suffix "i."

Other Errors

It was not possible to subsume 15 erroneous utterances produced by the students under the categories of substitution, omission or addition. Such errors were categorized as Other Errors and will be discussed here under the sub-categories of lack of voicing, word order, possessive suffix, wrong word, and wrong gerund form.

Table 6. *Other Errors*

Error Categories	Number	Percentage
Lack of Voicing	1	6,67
Word Order	1	6,67
Possessive Suffix	3	20,0
Wrong Word	9	60,0
Wrong Gerund Form	1	6,67
Total	15	100

The examination of the mini-corpus showed that students failed to form correct utterances with the accusative case marking due to the categories of errors shown in Table 5. For example, in sentence (57) lack of voicing prevents the utterance from being classified as grammatically correct.

(57) Bu ***yolculuku** hiç beğenmedik. [We didn't like this **trip** at all.]

"In Turkish, ç, k, g, p, t consonants at the end of the word become voiced and softened when they are placed between two vowels" (Ergin, 2000, p. 81). This rule being applied, sentence (57) should be corrected by replacing the sound "k" with "ğ."

(58) **Camii Hitgah'ı** görmek isterler. [They want to see **Hitgah Mosque**.]

The error in sentence (58) is concerned with the ordering of the nouns in the noun compound "Camii Hitgah'ı." This noun compound can be fixed by changing the order of the nouns and adding the correct accusative suffix allomorph, thus writing "Hitgah Camii'ni."

(59) İnsanlar onun ***evlenmeği** kabul etmediler. [People did not approve his **getting married**.]

(60) Bizim ***evlenmeği** kabul etmeyecekler. [They won't approve our **getting married**.]

(61) Bir atasözü insanların **vaktimizi** düzenlemesinden bahsediyor. [A proverb is about people's managing **their time**.]

(62) İnkar et babamın adını ya da **asılı**. [Deny my father's name or **origin**.]

In the sentences above, the students successfully attached the accusative suffix. Still, these sentences are incorrect as the possessive suffixes are missing in the gerund structures in (59) and (60), and wrong possessive suffixes were attached in (61) and (62).

(63) Beni ***korkmuyor**. [It doesn't **scare** me.]

(64) Evimi ***hazırlanıyordum**. [I was **preparing** my house.]

(65) Bu fırsatı ***çaldığım** için çok mutluyum. [I am happy to **take** this opportunity.]

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(66) İnsan hayatta başarıyı çok farklı etmenler vasıtasıyla ***atarlar**. [People **attain** success in life due to many factors.]

Students produced 9 sentences where they chose the wrong verb in an otherwise grammatically correct sentence. Sentences (63), (64), (65) and (66) are examples of these. To correct these sentences, the verbs "korkmak" and "hazırlanmak" should be changed with their transitive counterparts "korkutmak" and "hazırlamak." In sentences (65) and (66), the students seem to have chosen two semantically unsuitable verbs. Both should be changed with the Turkish verb "yakalamak/to catch" to form the correct collocation "fırsat yakalamak/ to take an opportunity" and "başarı yakalamak/ to attain success." These examples highlight the importance of not only teaching single verbs but collocations. The last example shows an instance of wrong gerund form:

(67) ***Ne çalışmamızı** değiştirmemiz lazım. [We need to change **what we are working on**.]

In sentence (67), we see a failed attempt to form a noun clause in Turkish, using the relative pronoun "ne/what," which is possible in a European language like English. However, to form a correct noun clause, ithe suffix "dık" should have been added between the base form of the verb "çalışmak" and the accusative case marking.

Conclusion

This study was based on a small corpus of 7177 token and 2991 types created by collecting written compositions of 40 learners of Turkish as a second language at OMÜ Türkçe during the previous years. The aim of the study is to analyse the accusative case use of learners of Turkish as a second language to determine to what extent learners of Turkish can use the accusative case accurately and categorize their errors. The findings showed that of 202 instances of accusative case use, 76 were inaccurate. The number of errors detected increased when the researchers manually tagged 62 cases of omission and 14 instances where the accusative case was substituted for another case. When those numbers were added, the total number of accusative case related errors increased to 152, suggesting that the accusative case is one of the challenging structures for learners of Turkish even at later stages of the learning process.

A further examination and subcategorization of errors revealed that of all the errors, errors of omission (40,79%) had the highest frequency, which may be explained with "the least effort theory." It is followed by errors of substitution (25,66%), errors of addition (23,68%) and other errors (9,87%). Previous error analysis studies (see Kim & Yoo, 2015; Tahaineh, 2011) conducted on learners of English as a foreign language had revealed substitution as the most common error type. The dissimilarity between the results of the present study and the previous ones could be explained with different origins and characteristics of the languages at stake. Regarding substitution errors, students' showed a very high tendency to substitute the dative case with the accusative case and vice versa. The

examples discussed reveal that students used a direct object with intransitive verbs and collocation and indirect object with transitive verbs and collocations, thus forming inaccurate sentences. Thus, like Kim & Yoo (2015), the findings highlights the importance of teaching C-selection or subcategorization restrictions of verbs in language classrooms. "Subcategorization restrictions are syntactic constraints on the kinds of complements (e.g., direct object, prepositional phrase) that lexical categories (e.g., verbs) can take" (Parker&Riley, 2005: 65). For language learners to be able to use a word accurately, they have to be informed about subcategorization rules and restrictions concerning verbs as well as its semantic restrictions. On a final note, a student corpus of learners of Turkish is necessary for larger scale corpus studies to be conducted.

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